



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/662,940	09/16/2003	Kimball C. Chen	64171.000002	2033
21967 7590 01/25/2007 HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEPARTMENT 1900 K STREET, N.W. SUITE 1200 WASHINGTON, DC 20006-1109			EXAMINER BORISSOV, IGOR N	
			ART UNIT 3628	PAPER NUMBER
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		01/25/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/662,940

Applicant(s)

CHEN ET AL.

Examiner

Igor N. Borissov

Art Unit

3628

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 October 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,7,8,13,15,17,19,152,180-182,186,187,192,194,196,198 and 331 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,7,8,13,15,17,19,152,180-182,186,187,192,194,196,198 and 331 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

Amendment received on 10/19/2006 is acknowledged and entered. Claims 1 and 180 have been amended. Claims 4-6, 9-12, 14, 16, 18, 20-151, 153-179, 183-185, 188-191, 193, 195, 197, 199-330, and 332-432 were withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 19, 152, 180-182, 186, 187, 192, 194, 196, 198 and 331 were elected without traverse. Claims 1 and 180 have been amended.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 19, 152, 180-182, 186, 187, 192, 194, 196, 198 and 331 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the following limitation: "where the at least one communication device initiates at least one action having the effect of providing a change of one or more of resource-consumption and resource-production attributed to the at least one device of one or more devices", which is confusing. It is not clear what a particular method step is actually considered. The claim merely indicates the effect or results of said step without actually reciting said step.

Same reasoning is applied to the remaining claims.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 19, 152, 180-182, 186, 187, 192, 194, 196, 198 and 331 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown, Jr. et al. (US 5,544,036) in view of Woolard et al. (US 6,178,362).

Brown, Jr. et al. (Brown) teaches a method and system for remote energy management and home automation system, said system including a central computer 24, a communication device (controller 14), and a communication link (transmitter 20), said method comprising:

Claims 1 and 180,

generating at least one informational message at a central computer related to one or more of resource-consumption by, resource-production by and control of at least one device (C. 4, L. 7-14; Figs. 1,2);

transmitting the at least one informational message to at least one communication device (controller 14) (C. 4, L. 7-14),

where the at least one communication device (controller 14) initiates at least one action having the effect of providing a change of one or more of resource-consumption and resource-production attributed to the at least one device of one or more devices (C. 4, L. 7-18).

Brown does not explicitly teach that said central computer includes a server. Woolard et al. (Woolard) teaches a method and system for remote energy management and home automation system, said system including a central server 60 (Fig. 3), which is configured to be in control communication with peripheral energy consuming devices D (C. 7, L. 37-38, 8-15).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Brown to include that said central computer includes a server, as disclosed in Woolard, because it would advantageously allow to implement said system for multi-building facility, and interconnect various equipment for purposes of control and managing, as specifically stated in Woolard (C. 7, L. 32-35):

Claims 2 and 181, Brown teaches said method and system, wherein the at least one informational message comprises at least one control signal and wherein the at least one communication device comprises at least one interface unit, where the interface unit in communication with the one or more devices controls the at least one device in accordance with the at least one control signal, to take an action having the effect of providing a change of one or more of resource-consumption and resource-production attributed to the at least one device (C. 4, L. 7-18).

Claims 3 and 182, Woolard teaches: receiving at least one command at the central server, wherein the at least one command is related to controlling at least one device and wherein the at least one informational message is generated based on the at least one command (C. 5, L. 47-51). The motivation to combine references would be to provide tools for developing strategies to reduce energy costs (Woolard; C. 5, L. 49).

Claims 7 and 186, Brown teaches said method and system, wherein the at least one informational message comprises an instruction directed to one or more of activating and deactivating the at least one device (C. 4, L. 7-14).

Claims 8 and 187, Brown teaches said method and system, wherein the at least one informational message comprises an instruction to adjust the operation of the at least one device wherein the instruction to adjust the operation is directed to one or more of state, use, one or more parameters, one or more set points, operating characteristics, duty cycle, control logic and scheduling of the at least one device (C. 4, L. 44-51).

Claims 13, 14, 152 and 192, 194, 331, Woolard teaches said method and system, wherein the at least one command is generated in accordance with a user profile (C. 6, L. 49-54).

Claims 17 and 196, Brown teaches said method and system, wherein the devices comprises one or more of an air-conditioner, boiler, motor starter and heater (C. 4, L. 63-66).

Claims 19 and 198, Brown teaches said method and system, wherein the interface unit causes the adjustments of one or more of resource-consumption and

Art Unit: 3628

resource-production attributed to the at least one device in accordance with the at least one informational message (C. 4, L. 10-19, 47).

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 10/19/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to the applicant's argument that the claims particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention, it is noted that the following limitation: "where the at least one communication device initiates at least one action having the effect of providing a change of one or more of resource-consumption and resource-production attributed to the at least one device of one or more devices" does not recite an actual method step, but merely indicates the effect or results of said step, thus rendering the claims indefinite.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, both references are related to a method and system for remote energy management and home automation system, said system including a central computer. The motivation to modify Brown to include that said central computer includes a server, as disclosed in Woolard, would be implementing said system for multi-building facility, and interconnecting various equipment for purposes of control and managing, as specifically stated in Woolard (C. 7, L. 32-35).

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

In response to the applicant's argument that the prior art fails to disclose "receiving at least one command at the central server, wherein the at least one command is related to controlling at least one device and wherein the at least one informational message is generated based on the at least one command", it is noted that Woolard teaches said feature (C. 5, L. 47-51):

In response to the applicant's argument that the prior art fails to disclose that "the at least one command is generated in accordance with a user profile", it is noted that Woolard was applied to disclose said feature (C. 6, L. 49-54).

### ***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

Art Unit: 3628

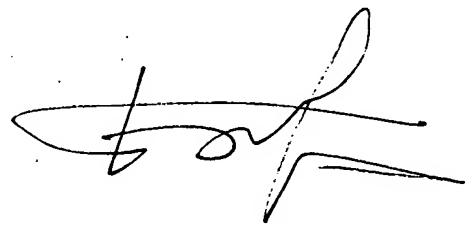
the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Igor Borissov whose telephone number is 571-272-6801. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John W. Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

IB

01/22/2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Igor N. Borissov', with a stylized flourish at the end.

IGOR N. BORISSOV  
PRIMARY EXAMINER